

REMARKS/DISCUSSION:

This Amendment A is being filed within three months after the shortened statutory period for response that ended on September 18, 2003.

Accordingly, a Petition for a Three-Month Extension of Time is attached hereto.

By this Amendment A, claims 19-31 are pending in this application. Second claim 24 and claim 25 (dependent upon the second claim 24) have been canceled. New claims 30 and 31 have been added, which contain the subject matter of the canceled claims 24-25.

Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the Examiner's telephone interviews on December 10 and 11, 2003.

Applicant has carefully studied the outstanding Office Action. This Amendment is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 19, 26 and 27 stand rejected as being anticipated by Okada et al. (US 6,056,735)

Claims 19 and 27 have been amended to include "a curved treatment portion" as also recited in claim 26. Okada neither discloses nor suggests a curved treatment portion as now claimed.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 21-25, 28 and 29 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Okada and further in view of Beaupre (US6,283,981). Beaupre neither discloses nor suggests a treatment portion comprising a balance asymmetry. Therefore, based on the previous discussions, neither Beaupre nor Okada, alone or in

combination, disclose or suggest the claimed invention. Reconsideration is requested.

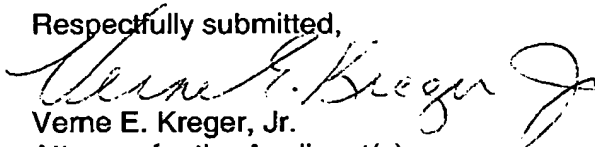
Conclusion

Applicant submits that in view of the discussion, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103 have been overcome and that the invention is now patentable over the cited prior. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider all rejections and pass this case to issue.

Should any minor points remain prior to issuance of a Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required to Account No. 10-0750/END-810/VEK.

Respectfully submitted,



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